

And the Winner Is

Why do you think it is important for young people like yourself to know and understand something about the Negro Leagues?


Born and raised in the '90s, today's youth has everything we need within our reach. We do not understand segregated classrooms, nor do we comprehend the insults implied behind Jim Crow laws. Perhaps we have lost the appreciation for the tremendous efforts made by inspirational leaders such as Rube Foster. The formation of the Negro Leagues represents a milestone in American Baseball History and of course, the battle for racial equality.

Black athletes during the turn of the 19th century were subject to judgments based on skin and not skill. This was a huge blow to the talented players as well as young boys aspiring to become great players. This decision by the *National Association of Baseball Players* made conditions. What is notable, however, is the strength shown by the black community. The formation of the Negro League was by no means smooth. Financial crisis and segregation laws all threatened its existence. However, the League was determined to thrive regardless of many obstacles, for this spirit, the caliber of the teams remained high. Countless players proved their abilities on field.

The condition in which the Negro Leagues fought and flourished is beyond what a 17 year old can imagine. From the founding of the Negro Leagues in the 1880s to today, World Series are now open to any race, schools are integrated, and affirmative action initiated. Truly, many great strides have been made. Yet racial discrimination is far from eradicated. Even today the Negro Leagues suffers from lack of attention. Their historical importance has not been recognized to the extent it deserves. Therefore, the young generation will benefit not only from promoting the significance of the Negro Leagues, but also from internalizing this rare determination exhibited by the founders, players and history of the Negro Leagues.

I hope every young person will be able to pursue their ambitions with the same level of ferocity and persistence. At the same time, the Negro Leagues teaches us the power of teamwork. The great cooperation shown by the Negro Leagues spreads a very strong message: work together. Today, there are countless individuals who dream of loosening racial tensions. However, rather than fighting by ourselves, we should gather our voices and join for a common cause. This generation holds many promises for the future.

Thank you for this great opportunity and a lesson for myself.



Yu Meng Qi